

SPRIT OF THE PRESS.

EDITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALS UPON CURRENT TOPICS—COMPILED EVERY DAY FOR THE EVENING TELEGRAPH.

Satanic Preachers.

From "Brick" Postmaster's N. Y. Democrat. Diodorus Siculus informs us that it was a law of the ancient Egyptians that if any man saw another assaulted and distressed by thieves and robbers, and did not do all in his power to protect the victim, he was himself adjudged worthy of death. If the politicians of the North, who look almost passively on, and see the helpless people of the South preyed upon and doomed by the voracious scoundrels and tools of Congress, were to be judged by such a law, how many of them would escape hanging?

Half of these claims will be allowed and paid, when suddenly a suspicion creeps into the Commissioner's mind that the decision is all wrong: it is summarily reversed, and the other half of the claimants are cut off from payment which, in nine cases out of ten, is justly due. This is a fair illustration of the principle, or rather lack of principle, which controls this office. Those who have dealings with it can never feel certain that it will carry out engagements even which it has voluntarily entered into. Casting aside the legal merits of the case, Mr. Rollins does not seem to have yet risen to a perception of that discretionary policy which should govern him. Repeated retractions and rulings deliberately and formally rendered must in the end destroy the public confidence in those who conduct the revenue which all tax-payers should feel, and must tend to bring the office into disrepute. This fact should be appreciated by those concerned. A ruling should not be publicly rendered until the point involved has been thoroughly and carefully considered, and a definite, final judgment formed upon it which is accepted by reason as sound. If any doubt exists as to its soundness, it should be reconsidered before promulgation, not after it.

Peace Societies.

From the N. Y. Tribune. The trouble with Peace Societies has been that they are too good for this world. We cannot say that the memorial on behalf of the Indians sent up to Congress by the Universal Peace Union shows it to be any exception to the rule. A very humane and generous, but likewise a very unwieldy, spirit pervades it. Nobody can read it without acknowledging the justice of its strictures upon our dealings with the Indians, or smiling at the innocence of its practical suggestions. "What diabolical inhumanity and wanton indiscrimination," it exclaims, "destroying the winter supplies of the Apaches, at the very time when they are most needed!" "Instead of erecting fortifications in their various posts, we should release their pressing necessities, furnish them with agricultural implements, tools, and teachers!" "Could anything be sentimentally more humane and practically more foolish? Imagine a member of this most excellent and benevolent Peace Union remonstrating with our army officers about the cruelty of destroying the supplies of the enemy! Conceive Sheridan's rough riders stopped in the midst of a charge on a party of painted Apaches or Kiowa braves, while some peaceful sergeant rides forward to ask the savages if they wouldn't rather have some seeds, tools, and teachers instead of the impending carbine balls and sabre cuts!"

have now to say that you were right and I was wrong." Hence the unquestioning confidence of Lincoln in all the subsequent operations of Grant. Lincoln was a practical man, and "demonstrate" with him was the greatest word in the language. Grant had demonstrated his capacities, and that was enough for Lincoln. Grant's decision of character, however, was the essential element of his victories. When he had worked to do, he promptly resolved upon his plan and went at it hammer and tongs. Like Praxiteles at Sebastopol, if he could not get in at the front door he would get in at the window, having resolved to get in. He knew no such word as fail. He held his councils of war, he heard the opinions of his generals, and it was always his plan and always his fight. He was flanked by the Wilderness and backed out. Grant was flanked in the Wilderness; but as two could play at that game he went on and fought it out on that line. It is impossible that such a man in the White House can be a blunderer like Johnson or a galvanized politician like Buchanan. The two houses of Congress will be more apt to find in General Grant the shrewdness of the amiable Lincoln and the resolution of Jackson, with something, too, of the simple and earnest republican notions of Jefferson, grappling at once with and attacking as these latter-day tyrannies of a hundred millions a year, and these lobby railroad jobs, covering a margin of over a thousand millions of money.

Now, this Tenure of Office law and the various other laws tying up the President's hands are but relics of the last four years' squabbles between Congress and Johnson. That fight is ended, and the party in power, having accepted and elected General Grant upon his record as their man for Johnson's place, are in honor bound to relieve him of these unwieldy cords and straps with which they have tied up Johnson. Or if the Presidential office as it was under Lincoln is not to be restored, if Congress is henceforth to be understood, and without further beating about the bush and as a simple matter of plain dealing with General Grant. Otherwise he will go into the Presidency like a man blindfolded, and unable to distinguish the White House from the War Office. Lastly, if the two houses desire a misunderstanding with the President elect from the beginning, they have only to inaugurate his tenure of office restrictions, which will be equivalent to a vote of a want of confidence. It will, however, be a dangerous thing to play fast and loose or hide and seek with a straightforward soldier of the will and tenacity of purpose possessed by General Grant.

The Darien Canal. From the N. Y. Times. The attention of the world has once more been drawn by Mr. Cushing's mission to that narrow neck of land which joins North and South America, and which one never sees on the map without feeling it is there to be cut through. To aid the gulphing of that tempting neck, in the interests of American commerce, is the object of Mr. Cushing's journey. That the result of his negotiations with the Government of New Granada will be the concession to the United States of a right of way to build an interoceanic canal can be confidently anticipated. As to the rest, it may be laid down as a safe proposition that, great as are the difficulties in constructing a canal across the Isthmus, there are none to which the existing devices of modern engineering are not fully adequate.

Congress and the New Departure Under General Grant.

From the N. Y. Herald. Will General Grant in the White House be a second Andy Johnson? Have the Republicans caught a Tartar? Some of the democratic politicians are setting their sails in this direction, and the radical leaders in Congress are evidently disinclined in advance of the General's inaugural to give him a loose rein. He is still to them a mystery. He gives no opinions and answers no questions concerning his Cabinet or his policy. He avoids the White House; but he also avoids the Capitol. His reticence excites suspicion, and his political antecedents are conservative. His radical friends are not sure whether he will prove a man of wax or a man of iron; a good worker in the traces, or as fractious as a mule; an automaton like Buchanan, a marplot like Johnson, or a master like Old Hickory. So they are waiting to hear the voice of the oracle. The prevailing opinion among the Republicans, however, seems to be that General Grant will have no policy of his own, except upon retrenchment, and that, having no desire for a second term, there is but little danger of his undertaking a repetition of Johnson's profitless fight with the two houses, or of Jackson's despotic discipline.

Meanwhile, we think, enough is known of the character of General Grant to justify the prediction that as President he will give us something better than the negative do-nothing policy of Buchanan, and something more efficient and decisive than Johnson's policy with-out the continuous fuss and dummery and incessant squabbles of Johnson. In the late Presidential canvass General Blair, who fought through the Vicksburg campaign with Grant, and through the campaign of Georgia and the Carolinas with Sherman, said of Grant that he was a soldier of great military capacity, a man of resolution, but withal a very ambitious man, and that if elected President he would hold on to the office to the end of his life, meaning thereby that in exchange for the confidence of the people he would play them the role of Louis Napoleon. It may be remembered, however, that General Blair delivered this opinion on the stump as the Democratic candidate for Vice-President; that he was hand-pushed and had a desperate battle to fight against heavy odds; and that accordingly he may be excused a little fancy sketching for luncheon.

But his testimony, under the circumstances, in behalf of General Grant as an able and meritorious soldier, and as a man of remarkable decision of character, is good. We may rely upon it, coming from a political adversary, and in the heat of a fiery canvass, and from the close personal observation of a soldier and a lawyer withal of keen perceptions, touching the peculiar qualities of different men. We all know that one of the peculiar qualities of General Grant in the field, and a most admirable one, too, was in his reports of battles, sieges, and campaigns to give the highest praise to his subordinate officers and soldiers and to say nothing of himself, or as little as possible. He was not jealous of the laurels of Sherman, Thomas, Sheridan, and other meritorious officers, but proud of them and proud to stand by them when under a cloud. Quietly permitting the inception of this and that campaign to be given to any other general name has demonstrated the truth that the campaigns of Vicksburg, Chattanooga, "the great march to the sea," and the crushing campaign from the Wilderness were the inceptions of General Grant. The honest and chivalrous Lincoln wrote to him after the capture of Vicksburg substantially, "When you disclosed to me your final plan I thought it a mistake. I

cannot say that you were right and I was wrong." Hence the unquestioning confidence of Lincoln in all the subsequent operations of Grant. Lincoln was a practical man, and "demonstrate" with him was the greatest word in the language. Grant had demonstrated his capacities, and that was enough for Lincoln. Grant's decision of character, however, was the essential element of his victories. When he had worked to do, he promptly resolved upon his plan and went at it hammer and tongs. Like Praxiteles at Sebastopol, if he could not get in at the front door he would get in at the window, having resolved to get in. He knew no such word as fail. He held his councils of war, he heard the opinions of his generals, and it was always his plan and always his fight. He was flanked by the Wilderness and backed out. Grant was flanked in the Wilderness; but as two could play at that game he went on and fought it out on that line. It is impossible that such a man in the White House can be a blunderer like Johnson or a galvanized politician like Buchanan. The two houses of Congress will be more apt to find in General Grant the shrewdness of the amiable Lincoln and the resolution of Jackson, with something, too, of the simple and earnest republican notions of Jefferson, grappling at once with and attacking as these latter-day tyrannies of a hundred millions a year, and these lobby railroad jobs, covering a margin of over a thousand millions of money.

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